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Poems

Editorial Staff

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When Things Go Wrong Staff: Poems

When from within
or without
Things go wrong
And cherished dreams
Are shattered
And Hope - On her last ebb
Squats on the edge
Of the yawning mouth
of doom's coffin

And when time
Sends you
To the mercy
Of those you once knew
And well trusted

And when the best
Of those you once knew
And well trusted
Send you back
Naked and weaponless
To the lonesome
Bushes of fate

Then you think
And bitterly lament

But before you cool
And sharpen the spikes
Of your time's revenge

You think
And deeply think
And through memories
Labyrinth of roads
And paths
With your mind's eye
You trace back
Until you find
The place
And know where
And when
You went wrong
And when you find
You jump without joy

Hence you decide:
To burn
Those flimsy fibres
In your soul's nest
Where kindness
Hatches her eggs,
And hovers
And watches
The needy ones
Like an eagle
Above her own.

Hence you decide:
To mould
An iron shield
Around your heart
So sad sounds
Of woe, from
Throats and lips
Of clan's men
Dried, cracked,

And muted by
Thirst and hunger
Won't ever be heard
And their eyes
Hypnotically staring
From wells
Deep and hollow
Won't ever penetrate
And friends' mirth
Once so sweet
Like music
Won't ever be heard

Hence you decide
to hate man
His colour
His creed
For man is bad
And has ever been

But once again
Before you cool
And firmly stand
On your judgment

You suddenly see
Your mascot -
The Tortoise
No more crawling
In your dark horizon
But lit
By the rising sun
And swiftly moving

And there -
On the tortoise back
You read:
Your parents' legend
"Be kind, be kind
To "Mankind"

Ali Said Ali
Mogadiscio, Somalia

I feel the breeze gently caress my face.
I feel the wind.
I feel the waves rippling at my feet.
I feel the tide.
I feel peace.
I feel peace. . . .

Sandra Walker
Washington, D. C.

The Ancestral Gathering

(intoned to Congas)

David Walker
come on down here
Nat Turner
come on down here
Patrice Lumumba
come on down here
Denmark Vesey
come on down here
Edward Mondlane
come on down here
El Hajj Malik Shabazz
come on down here
Martin Luther King, Jr.,
come on down here
Amilcar Cabral
come on down here
Albert Luthuli
come on down here
Medgar Evers
come on down here
Four young sisters bombed in a church
come on down here
10 million lost at sea
come on down here

Asante, M.K.
Williamsville, N.Y.

Time, in Black and White

(Colored People's Time)

What good is promptness in returning
a call—

A most White thing to do—
If the call is to say,
No, we have no openings,
Or, yes, that's right,
You owe \$50 more.

The meaning of colored people's time
Is never to be on time,
But always to be there,
Sometime,
Sooner or later,
Often-times, later.
That's the bad part.

But at least you know,
When colored people come,
They most often bring,
Not negatives,
But positives, like,
A kind word,
A tender caress,
A kiss,
A joint,
Good sex,
All of these.
That's the good part.

J. Charles Washington
Washington, D. C.

Missing Sections, Vol. 6 [], Iss. 1, Art. 10

You don't miss living
until life is dead
How can you miss memories
when they're in your head

You don't miss having fun
because its always there
We do miss sharing joy
because real love is rare

You don't miss struggling
until you've reached the top
then you lacked security
because you quickly drop

You don't miss your company
until you're all alone
Then you missed your funeral
because you died unknown

You don't miss a good chance
until it slips right by
Then you miss your effort
because you never try

You don't miss that good health
until you end up lame
We take our health for granted
once we don't feel the same

You don't miss what's given
until it's been reclaimed
What was yours is now missing
and you feel ashamed

When we miss temptations
we haven't met our needs
To chase after possession
means you live in greed

You shouldn't miss the ole days
or thrive on the past
Today must be dealt with
and the future is vast

You need not miss a friendship
if it was in vain
There's no need for sadness
since there was no gain

You don't miss acceptance
until you've been refused
You don't need your feelings
if they're being used

So we don't know what's missing
until the loss is felt
You don't know your playing hand
until the cards are dealt

Iley Brown Jr.
Howard University

Seasons

i could have caught the falling glass
before it hit the floor shattering into
a thousand pieces
but my hands were immobile as the
sunless morning.
recalling the gleaming enebriation of
an evening before

i remember -
lifting my shadow from the depths of
amorality
swinging i times duality.
sacrosanct roles escape explanation
in the exuberance of internal affirmation
the moon cries and soothes.

i could have said you are killing yourself
before life fled from pain
but my heart was silent as the napping
afternoon.

revealing the glaring fecundity of
contrasting temperments

i project -
spanning your shadow from the heights
of amorality
swinging in times duality.
situational complexities evidence
re-creation
in the proponderance of external
confirmation
the sun smiles and challenges.

i could have disguised my demeanor
before my soul slipped out
merging into shared realization
but my will stood abashed as the star
filled night.

so appealing the free association of
simplistic secrets
we unfold -
transcending the shadows of limitless
amorality
moving in times reality.
self containment allows separate
radiation
in third dimensional penetration
the earth trembles— ceaseless wonder
of seasons—and transforms. . . .

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